DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 029 949 VT 006 424

By-Kuvlesky, William P.

The Social-Psychological Dimensions of Occupational Mobility.

Pub Date 66

Note-33p.; Paper presented at the National Vocational-Technical Education Seminar on Occupational Mobility and Migration (Raleigh, April 18-22, 1966).

EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.75

Descriptors-Career Planning, *Conceptual Schemes, Economic Status, Job Placement, Job Satisfaction, Manpower Utilization, Models, *Occupational Aspiration, *Occupational Choice, *Occupational Mobility, Social Factors, Social Mobility, *Social Psychology, Social Status

The broad purpose of this paper is to develop the outline of a conceptual scheme that includes the major social-psychological parameters impinging upon the occupational placement process. The major importance of occupational placement can be viewed from at least two interrelated perspectives: the needs of society in fulfilling required positions in such a way that the system will operate efficiently, and the needs of the individual trying to find a place in the occupational structure that will help him satisfy his felt needs. This conceptual scheme focuses on two major areas of orientation: (1) status orientations, that is, aspirations and expectations, and (2) job preference, that is, non-status orientations such as to work with people or to have a chance to travel. Although prior studies suggest a weak to moderate positive association between occupational aspiration and subsequent behavior, it is concluded that almost nothing is known empirically about the nature or extent of the relationship of occupational expectations to long-run occupational status attainment. (CH)

C1

ED027947

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

THE SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY*

William P. Kuvlesky
Texas A&M University

*Paper presented at the National Vocational-Technical Education Seminar on Occupational Mobility and Migration, sponsored by The Center for Research, Training, and Occupational Education, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, April 18-22, 1966. The author would like to recognize the contribution of Dr. Robert C. Bealer of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, The Pennsylvania State University who has collaborated with me on several previous efforts utilized in developing this paper.

VT006424

Introduction

As all of you are aware, social scientists representing a variety of disciplines and public leaders at all levels are focusing an increasing amount of attention on the motivational and orientation factors involved in occupational mobility.[1] This interest has largely been generated as a result of widespread recognition that our society is experiencing structural problems in articulating the labor supply with changing occupational requirements. The situation is such that in many cases, individuals desire a type of employment in demand in the society but cannot obtain the requisite attributes required for these positions. At the same time, those persons aspiring to farming or low-skilled jobs find fewer of these positions available as the processes of industrialization, mechanization, and the use of cybernetics increasingly diminishes the need for this type of work. These problems of the general society show no likelihood of easy or early solution.

Why is the occupational placement process receiving so much attention? The major importance of occupational placement can be viewed from at least two interrelated perspectives: (1) the needs of society in filling required positions in such a way that the system will operate efficiently, and (2) the needs of the individual trying to find a place in the occupational structure that will help him satisfy his felt needs.

A basic requisite of any society is that positions necessary to its continued existence be filled by individuals who can perform the obligations of these positions effectively. In addition, in our society there seems to be a widely shared premise that we should always utilize human talent and skills to the uppermost possible limits. This utilization should be of particularly crucial concern presently. The strains on the

resources of our society are great and probably will continue for some time. As a result it is of great importance that we use as efficiently as possible the resources we have, and not the least important of these is human ability and talent.[2]

For the individual, an occupation is one of the most important social identities. Not only does the job one holds have direct significance for social prestige, but it also consumes a major portion of a person's daily life. In addition the job a person has determines to a large extent other facets of his life -- his kinds of associations with others, income, security, style of life, and even one's family's crucial life chances.[3]

A particularly vital area of consequence of occupational placement is the general satisfaction an individual has with his life. If a person aims at a particular type of job but does not attain it, he will very likely feel some degree of deprivation, depending on the intensity of his desire and the magnitude of his deflection. In our society many children are led to believe that their achievements are limited only by their desires and efforts. This has a tendency to produce relatively high goals which are not necessarily compatible with existing opportunities or the capabilities of the individual. The deprivation felt by the individuals who do not realize their occupational goals can have important consequences for their evaluation of society and for the manner in which they relate themselves to it. A widespread failure to meet the internalized needs and expectations of individuals making up a society, or a part of society, could lead to sharp intrasocietal conflict and possible drastic changes in the form of the society, a condition not widely sanctioned by most citizens.[4]

The process whereby individuals are differentially placed in the occupational structure of our society is in an extremely complex one. A host of factors normally interact to determine the final outcome. These include the characteristics of the individual, his network of social relations, the structure of the society and its dynamic properties, individual perception of all these things, and in turn the influence of such perceptions upon the values, attitudes, aspirations, and plans regarding the future occupational role and other social commitments that will influence the person's ability to reach the occupational goal he has selected.

According to Archie Haller in a recent publication, "We do not have a valid theory to explain and predict exactly what occupation a person will enter; we may never have."[5] I am not nearly as pessimistic about the potential for the development of such a theory as Haller; however, I do believe that the emergence of such a theory is dependent on our willingness to reach beyond the boundaries of our own particular disciplines and join in cooperative efforts with others. Although my own presentation is rather narrowly restricted to social-psychological considerations, it is my hope that it will make some contribution toward this end.

Objectives

The broad purpose of this paper is to develop the outline of a conceptual scheme that includes the major social-psychological parameters impinging upon the occupational placement process. At the same time I hope to at least make a beginning toward the development of a paradigm that articulates the orientation dimensions with the attainment process itself and other relevant areas of behavior. In the process I intend to point up problems of theory and measurement that might be useful in

directing and formulating subsequent research. These aims will be pursued through an examination of past work, both conceptual and empirical.

The reason that I have chosen to focus attention on conceptualization is, not because there are no problems of theory and measurement deserving consideration, but because it is my judgment that these problems evolve from our sorry lack of effort to clearly and logically formulate the ideas involved in our theories and which represent the starting points for our measurements. Anyone who has tried to wade through the abundant literature evolving from a number of different disciplines in this problem area should be well aware of the conceptual and terminological confusion prevailing. Inconsistencies in labeling and measuring a vast array of relatively unstructured ideas--occupational choice, aspirations, plans, expectations, vocational preferences, job values, goals, achievement motive, achievement syndrome, level of ambition, anticipatory socialization, job satisfaction, dissonance, goal deflection, relative deprivation, and others--have hampered such desired ends as interdisciplinary cooperation, codification and integration of findings, and the development of sound and valid theoretical statements. Yet, we have a tendency to continue to ignore each other's work, within our own disciplines to say nothing of between them, to spend more time in making more and more observations of larger and larger samples, to hold fast to our favorite instruments and techniques, and to all but ignore the prerequisite essential tasks of conceptual clarification and synthesis of our findings. If nothing else, it is my hope that this paper will stimulate you to seriously consider these often neglected basic needs.

Occupational Orientations

From a social-psychological perspective, which underlies this paper, a minimal conceptual distinction is suggested between the individual's orientation toward future work statuses and, as a huge, undifferentiated residual, all those factors in the person's situation which condition attainment but are not subsumable as occupational orientations. Among others I would place here such diverse things as the composition of the labor force, the nature of technological development, the level of economic production, quality and quantity of educational programs, restrictive covenants of labor unions, inherited physical disabilities, rate, age, sex, etc. It is obvious that such a model needs further differentiation. Furthermore, such a simple model, while it does not exclude occupational orientations as epiphemena, does not indicate to what degree occupational orientations influence job attainment. Attempts will be made to move in both of these directions at later points in the paper.

Social scientists have taken an extensive interest in studying the occupational orientation of youth for a number of years. Unfortunately, very little work has been done in reference to the occupational orientations of adults. This paper, of necessity, will have to rely primarily on evidence from research pertaining to youth orientation. However, at a later point in the paper a brief attempt will be made to theorize about the evolutionary development of occupational orientations through adulthood and the active work life of individuals.

My specific objectives at this point will be to differentiate conceptually a number of interrelated but qualitatively different ideas that have generally been subsumed under the titles of "occupational aspiration" or "occupational choice." I intend first of all to distinguish between

two major areas of orientation. One I choose to call status orientations; the other I label job preference. In reference to status orientation I will further differentiate two subtypes--aspirations and expectations. These then will be broken down into their constituent analytical elements. Next, I hope to demonstrate how job preferences differ from status orientations, to propose some possible interrelations between these two sets of phenomena, and to point out possibilities for future research. In addition, I will briefly consider the dynamics involved in the evolutionary development of these particular orientations and the nature of their interrelationships.

Occupational orientations are defined here to mean an individual's or group of individuals' orientations toward future work statuses and roles. Past research has emphasized the status dimensions of orientations and with some justification. In an achievement oriented society those aspects which lend themselves to simple evaluation of relative attainment are characteristically made of central importance by the actors themselves. Those orientations that have as their object the status or rank dimension of occupation I will refer to as status orientations. Research findings have indicated that people do have desires for certain work conditions and job characteristics (i.e., "to work with people" or to have "a chance to travel") that are not in a direct sense relevant to status evaluation in a hierarchal manner.[6] These nonstatus orientations I have labeled job preferences. Because the status orientations by far represent the bulk of past research interests and are of more interest to me, I will focus on conceptual specification of these. However, job preferences are in need of similar specification and should not be ignored, particularly in research attempting to explain placement in specific job roles.

Status Orientations

A person is generally oriented toward placement in a number of different social structures that have status significance (i.e., occupation, education, place of residence, marriage-family, politics, income, etc.). These can be referred to as status-areas and the orientations toward future placement in them as status-orientations. Occupational status-orientations represent a specific form of this more general class of phenomena. There are two major types of status-orientations: (1) aspiration (preferred identity) and (2) expectation (anticipated identity). I will first focus on the idea of occupational aspirations--specifying its precise meaning and offering some suggestions about minimal analytical distinctions that seem necessary to adequately research it. I will then differentiate aspiration from the related but qualitatively different idea of expectation and indicate why such a distinction is necessary.

Occupational Aspirations

All too often in the writing about and research on the field, occupational aspiration is not even defined and/or the stimulus question(s) used to elicit responses is unreported. For example, Kahl, in a widely quoted article, "Educational and Occupational Aspirations of 'Common Man' Boys," never indicated the nature of the instrument used to obtain this information; and, similarly, E. Grant Youmans, in reporting a Michigan study, used the term "occupational aspiration" but never defined it or gave a clue to the nature of his relevant indicator.[7] This type of difficulty is compounded by most researchers' failure to realize the several dimensions involved in the concept. Or, even worse, the same or very similar terminology is used when referring to different analytical elements. Thus, for instance, occupational aspiration is sometimes defined

as the work role an individual wants or would like to have, and at other times it is defined as the occupation the individual expects or is resigned to attaining. Thus, for example, Schwarzweller, in a recent study, used the following question to elicit "occupational aspirations": "If you had your choice and you were completely free to choose, what would you like to do as a lifetime kind of work?"[8] Meanwhile, Middleton and Grigg in another study used a question clearly eliciting responses of a different nature to attain indicators of what they also call "occupational aspirations." The question they used was: "In what occupation do you think that you will most likely be working ten years from now?"[9] Some ordering of the sociologist's tools is obviously called for.

The idea of aspiration is at least more involved than most of the extant research has recognized. An aspiration usually refers to a person's, or grouping of persons', orientation toward a goal. In this sense, aspiration is a special form of the concept attitude, which is generally defined as a predisposition to behave towards a social object in a particular way - an orientation toward a social object. The distinction between the two concepts is that the object involved in an aspiration is a goal and therefore is more or less desired by individuals; whereas, an attitude may be positively or negatively directed.[10]

The concept aspiration can be broken down into three analytical elements - (1) a person or persons, (2) wanting (orientation), (3) a social object (goal). Each of these elements is variable. Both the goal and orientation elements can vary internally and what is more, can vary independently of each other.

The Goal Element

Goals which can vary in kind are usually described in reference to a particular social status or status-attribute (occupation, income, education, residence, etc.). These kinds of statuses will be referred to as goal-areas.[11]

A person generally is oriented toward a number of goal-areas at one time--he desires an occupation, a residence, an education, an income, and many other social objects. Furthermore, he characteristically desires a particular type of occupation, a specifiable range of income, a certain level of education, etc. These goals may or may not be perceived as directly interrelated by the individual and consequently his goal-specifications may or may not be logically consistent from the perspective of the observer. However, because the individual does visualize himself in future statuses, he can and does have relatively specific aspirations for each goal-area. In reference to occupation, evidence exists that adolescents can indicate relatively specific goals.[12] Thus, we can classify aspirations on the basis of goal-areas and differentiate within the goal-areas on qualitatively or quantitatively different choices.[13] A range of potential achievement can be determined for each goal-area, arbitrary limits drawn, and evaluation made about the relative level of aspirations. Thus, we can speak of a person's goal as being high or low depending upon where his desired choice falls on a range of potential achievement. For instance, one can note a difference between a desire to become a doctor as compared to a desire to become a policeman, or a machinist, or a farmer, or some other less prestigeful occupation.

The Orientation Element

The orientation element as analytically distinguished from the goal-specification also varies. Given a goal-area, and regardless of alternatives within the area specified, a person can have a variable amount of desire (more or less) for it.[14] For instance, the person desiring to become a policeman may be willing to sacrifice anything or to defer his other goals to achieve this level of occupation, while the person who desires to become a doctor might not be willing to give up anything for it. Thus we can speak of a person having strong or weak aspirations, depending on the intensity of his desire to achieve his goal-specification and regardless of whether the goal-specification itself is ranked as high or low. Furthermore, we can suggest that in order to prevent unnecessary confusion and difficulties in communication, the use of the descriptive terms high and low be restricted to a description of the goal-specification when used in reference to aspirations. Likewise, it is our suggestion that the terms strong and weak be used only to describe the relative intensity of the orientation element. Currently the terms high and low are used in reference to both elements.

The orientation element is an important consideration in studying aspirations because, as mentioned previously, an individual has a number of goals. An estimation of the strength or weakness of his orientation toward each gives us an indication of his valuation of different goals and which ones he is likely to put before others. Such information would certainly be useful for predicting his behavior in reference to the attainment of any particular goal-specification. It is not enough to know whether the goal is high or low in terms of an evaluation of difficulty of attainment, it must also be known how strongly the goal is desired

relative to others if a thorough explanation and a high level of prediction is to be obtained.

Everything else being equal, it is logical to expect that of two individuals having identical goal-specifications but different strength orientations, the individual having the strongest desire is more likely to attain his goal than is the individual having less desire. Unfortunately, we do not know if this is true for most studies dealing with aspirations focus only on the goal elements.[15] The total neglect of the strength of occupational aspirations may go a long way in explaining the poor ability of current aspiration indicators for predicting attainment.

Several investigators have examined the orientation aspect of aspiration in limited problem contexts. Fliegel, for instance, found that the strength of the orientation toward income as a goal-area (economic aspirations) for farmers in a Pennsylvania county was negatively related to their willingness to remain in farming as an occupation.[16] As far as I am aware, however, the goal and orientation elements of occupational aspirations have not been investigated simultaneously. It would seem to me that efforts to measure the intensity of orientation factor in subsequent research and to use it in conjunction with measures of the goal-specification element should lead to more useful results.

Aspirations Differentiated from Expectations

Another consideration that needs attention is the necessity to distinguish between aspirations and expectations.[17] What is referred to by the term expectation, is the individual's estimation of his probable attainment in reference to a particular goal-area -- what level of occupation he expects to attain.[18] It seems prudent that aspirations and expectations be analytically distinguished. Expectations should not be

equated with aspirations, for the object involved with an expectation need not be desired and, therefore, need not be a goal. The object involved with an expectation is an anticipated occurrence and the individual's orientation toward this expected state may be favorable or unfavorable.

There is empirical evidence from recent studies to indicate that adolescent respondents distinguish aspirations from expectations, and this evidence further shows that there can be, and frequently is, an important qualitative difference between what a person wants and what he expects to get in relation to occupations.[19] The available evidence also indicates that expectations are to a much greater extent comparable to existing occupational opportunities than are aspirations.[20] Conversely, expectations need not always be "lower" than aspirations. The case of a businessman's son wishing to become a skilled auto mechanic or a truck driver but reconciling himself to "taking over the store" is just one example where "expectations" may exceed aspirations.

Since there can be important empirical difference between aspirations and expectations, it seems logical that these two phenomena should be conceptually distinguished and care taken that appropriate indicators of each are used.

In this regard, part of the recent work of Haller and Miller can be briefly reviewed for further insights. Their effort to clarify the idea of "occupational aspiration" culminated in a scale to index the phenomenon. In that endeavor they coined the term, "expression levels."[21] By this they mean the range of a goal-area within which a person's goal-specification falls may include a range of particular alternatives, rather than being a single point in a distribution of possible alternatives.

Recognition of this fact certainly seems reasonable and of value. However, when they go on to imply that the limits of this range can be determined by eliciting from the respondent what job he would like to have ("idealistic limit"), and what job he expects to have ("realistic limit"), it is not certain that this is the most apt choice. While an individual may well have a range of goal-specifications, that range need not be disclosed by simply asking what he desires (or likes, or wants) on one hand and what he expects on the other, for <u>each of these aspects can have a range of its own</u>. Thus, with regard to expectations, the common practice of ordering (or ranking) contingencies certainly occurs. For aspirations, the clearest idea of range is found in the child's uninhibited response to the question, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" He often will volunteer wanting to be a fireman, tractor-operator and doctor (or some such combination of prestigefully different choices) in the same breath! It can be suggested that this quality is never fully "outgrown" and particularly not be adolescence. Logically, then aspirations and expectations are two distinct and separate aspects, even though they are related, and a consideration of their interaction is an important area of study.

Although in some cases occupational aspirations and expectations may be congruent, in many cases they are probably not, especially in reference to adolescents. The person's expectations may be totally unrealistic from the perspective of the outside observer. Due to a lack of experience in and knowledge of the larger society, the adolescent may grossly underestimate the limiting quality of his situation -- common language catches the point in speaking of "the optimism of youth" -- or the individual may unduely acquiesce in the face of it -- we hear the idea in such terms as

"the lack of drive and ambition in today's kids." Whatever the case, however, establishing the extent to which aspirations and expectations are congruent or not, identifying variables that influence or determine the nature of their relationship, and pin-pointing the consequences of differential relationships between them, all become significant areas of study. It would seem reasonable to expect that aspirations and expectations are related to occupational attainment in different ways.

In addition, it might be fruitful in consequent research to treat the relative difference between the goal-specifications of aspirations and the anticipated status-level of expectation as conceptually distinct phenomena - anticipatory goal deflection. It may be that this relationship has some causal bearing on felt deprivation, psychological and social satisfactions, self-image, and perhaps directly or indirectly on social interaction.

In brief, it seems reasonable to propose that expectations can vary independently of aspirations, on the one hand, and of the external, non-preferential aspects of one's situation on the other. Thus, expectations as the individual's more or less accurate assessment of the external, limiting environment becomes a major differentiation within the original model from which we started. Between aspirations and the residual, "all other factors," we can propose to place expectations.

Obviously, in this effort I have focused on the object element of expectations - the anticipated status. The orientation element, usually conceptualized as "degree of certainty" should be mentioned - particularly in reference to the possible significance it may have for triggering anticipatory socialization in reference to expected work roles.

Previously it was suggested that aspirations and expectations might be related to subsequent attainments in different ways. Since our primary

focus in this seminar is occupational mobility, it would seem appropriate to consider the nature and extent of the relationship existing between status orientations and subsequent attainment. However, I would first like to briefly point out several further specifications of our model which should prove useful.

Sub-Dimensions of Status Orientations

In attempting to clarify and add to the precision of the conceptualization of occupational aspirations and expectations, I have focused thus far almost entirely on the two major elements of orientation (i.e., desire and certainty) and the social object (i.e., goal-specification and status anticipated). Several, almost entirely unexplored, sub-dimensions of these elements should be considered for exploration in subsequent research. One of these, the amount of time involved in the status projection, is related to the orientation element. The other refers to the degree of specificity in indicating the status object of the orientation.

The temporal dimension has sometimes been introduced, often unconsciously, into instruments used to measure occupational status-orientations. Haller and Miller indicate that the purpose of stating a time limit, particularly in terms of research, is to control on any variability that might occur in the respondents' interpretation of the stimulus question - to be sure that all respondents are oriented toward the same "goal period."[22]

It is my hypothesis that the temporal dimension is more appropriate for expectations than for aspirations, especially if aspiration is conceived of in terms of ultimate goal status. While it seems logical to anticipate that a person's expectation of attainment may well be influenced by the amount of time specified, it seems less safe, in my judgment, that a similar consideration is going to alter an individual's conception of his

ultimate goals. The use of "short-run goal-periods" in conjunction with a stimulus question or instrument designed to elicit occupational goals asks the respondent to indicate what job he wishes to attain by a certain time ("when your schooling is over") or at a particular age (say 25). This probably leads the respondent to consciously evaluate his possible achievement under the stipulated condition. As a result his response might indicate one of several very different things - an ultimate goal, a subgoal, or an anticipated status. If this proposition is true, such an instrument would produce responses that would be difficult to interpret unambiguously.

My supposition that the temporal consideration is more relevant to a consideration of expectations than to aspirations is, of course, an empirically testable proposition. To my knowledge it remains untested. At any rate it appears to be obvious that in developing instruments to tap status-orientations in future studies we should give close attention to the temporal dimension we incorporate.

I have not explored the possibilities of variation involved with degree of specificity indicated in the status objects of status-orientations; however, it seems clear to me that this dimension of variability is equally applicable to both aspirations and expectations. Although I have not attempted to operationalize this analytical element, my experience in observing raw responses to stimulus questions eliciting occupational goals and anticipated statuses leads me to believe there is considerable empirical variability existing along this dimension. As to the significance of this factor, Burchinal suggests that at least aspirations tend to become more specific as the individual "crystallizes" his occupational "choice."[23] If this proposition is valid, it certainly needs to be tested,

a measure of specificity of status-orientations may provide an indicator for "vocational maturity." Particularly in reference to expectations, this additional specification might be useful in predicting whether or not or to what extent anticipatory socialization will occur in reference to particular types of jobs.

Occupational Status-Orientations and Subsequent Attainment

As has been indicated previously a great deal of research effort has been expended on the study of occupational aspirations of youth in recent years and the volume of such efforts continues to increase. Most of this research consists of attempts to discover what variables influence the development of differential levels of occupational goals and/or expected job attainment. While diverse, these efforts have characteristically evolved from the assumption, often unstated, that status-orientations, particularly aspirations, of youth are crucial or, at least, important determinants of subsequent adult status-attainments.[24] However, the nature and extent of the relationship between orientations and attainments remains relatively unexplored.

In most theoretical efforts concerned with the development of "occupational choice" (i.e., the process of occupational placement or occupational attainment) the idea that occupational aspirations play an important directional role is given prominence.[25] On the other hand, it is clearly indicated in all such efforts that the job one acquires is conditioned not only by the preferences and desires of the person for a particular occupational status - the aspect strongly implied as crucial by the term "choice" - but also by many factors over which the individual has little or no control.

While existing models do exclude the possibility of aspirations being epiphenomena, they leave open the question of to just what extent occupational status-orientations influence job attainment. What do prior empirical studies tell us about this relationship?

To the best of the author's knowledge there have been only five reported studies that have explored, through the use of necessary longitudinal data, the relationship between adolescents' occupational status-orientations (i.e., aspirations and expectations) and their subsequent attainments. Two of these studies were done more than twenty years ago and suffer a number of faults that seriously limit their utility and, consequently, these will not be examined in detail. We can note, however, that they reported "no significant relationship" and a weak, positive correlation between aspirations and attainments.[26]

Of the three more recent efforts, one by R. J. Porter in 1954 was explicitly concerned with the relationship of expectations to attainment within an extremely short time span - 6 months.[27] Porter reported that six months after graduation 79 percent of his respondents were "following the plan they had proposed or one on a comparable prestige level." While these findings demonstrate that certain youth may be able to predict their occupational status levels over a very short time span with a high degree of accuracy, they are not relevant for an assessment of the relationships existing between either ultimate aspirations or long-run expectations and subsequent long-run occupational attainment.

The only other relevant studies are Haller and Sewell's study of rural males in Jefferson County, Wisconsin, and my own study of originally rural males in Pennsylvania - both of these efforts claim to focus on the relation of adolescents' goal-specifications to subsequent attainment.[28]

In 1955 Haller restudied 431 male respondents who were first studied by Sewell in 1948 as juniors and seniors in high school. A measure of level of occupational aspiration was obtained through the initial interview and information about occupational attainment during the terminal contact. The index scores measuring level of aspiration were related to the prestige scores of 1955 occupations. A correlation coefficient of +.46 resulted and it was concluded that LOA "tends to predict behavior toward its object." Several criticisms can be raised against this study, particularly in reference to the indicator of level of aspiration used, which bring into question the validity of the correlation observed as an accurate measure of the degree of relationship between level of occupational aspiration and level of occupational attainment. The indicator of occupational aspiration (LOA) was an index of North-Hatt prestige scores assigned to four responses: (1) the highest prestige occupation respondents had ever considered; (2) the lowest prestige occupation they had ever considered; (3) the occupation they planned to enter; and (4) the occupation they would like to enter if they had perfect freedom of choice. The index does not appear to be unidimensional - it incorporates responses that represent different phenomena, thereby making it difficult to determine exactly what is being measured. The measure certainly ignores the distinction made previously between aspiration and expectation, since indicators of both are incorporated in the index. The selection of the highest and the lowest occupation <u>ever</u> considered is somewhat questionable in reference to the predictive quality of the index. It is not clear that the respondents were to make all their responses apply to a single point in time. This is important because the development of aspirations is generally taken to be a dynamic process.

But, even accepting the reported correlation at face value one has to conclude that only a moderate positive relation existed between level of goal-specification and level of subsequent job attainment for this Wisconsin sample. Furthermore, the fact of correlation, and in turn predictive quality, does not establish any necessary causal link between aspiration and attainment.

It was the desire for a more detailed understanding of the extent and nature of the relationship between occupational goals and subsequent attainment that precipitated my study in Pennsylvania. The data were obtained from a representative panel of Pennsylvania rural, male high school sophomores first contacted in 1947 and recontacted approximately ten years later. In the 1947 questionnaire aspiration was sought by asking simply "What occupation would you like to follow?"[29] The responses to this question and a stimulus question indicating 1957 attainment were classified according to a modified Alba Edwards scheme.[30]

The findings of this analysis indicated that adolescent aspirations were related to subsequent occupational attainments in a positive manner; however, the association was never overwhelmingly strong and varied considerably by type of aspiration. This finding should not be interpreted to mean that aspirations had no directional influence on attainment. Rather, it suggests that the path from desire to realization is characteristically beset by many intervening factors which in some instances may push attainment beyond one's initial aspirations or, what appears to occur more often, curtail it. Unfortunately, my data did not permit a rigorous examination of this matter. However, some further insights were gleaned from a closer examination of the data. It was observed that proportional rate of attaining unskilled jobs decreased consistently with the decrease in the relative

prestige value of the original goal. A converse trend was observed in reference to the attainment of professional jobs. These two observations would seem to indicate that adolescent goal-levels do influence at least extreme levels of attainment. In addition, it was discovered that those persons aspiring to particular occupations attained that type of job with greater frequency than those having other goal-specifications. For instance, even though the managerial aspirants had a very low rate of goal fulfillment, 10 percent, they attained managerial jobs at more than twice the proportional rate of the total sample. An even more dramatic instance is observed in reference to the differential attainment of farming - a ratio of more than 3 to 1 between aspirants to farming and the total sample. Therefore, it can be said that an aspiration for a particular occupational status did tend to increase the probability of attaining that status, even though it was not generally a good predictor of attainment.

Over-all, it can be concluded that evidence from prior studies suggest a weak to moderate positive association between occupational aspirations and subsequent behavior.

One implication immediately suggested by this line of evidence is that aspirations do not seem to be a good predictive device for long-run occupational attainments. However, some caution is called for in making this statement. It is entirely possible that with the development of more sensitive and efficient indicators a greater association might be found to exist between aspirations and attainment. Also, it should be noted that a longitudinal record of occupational aspirations through adulthood might show a patterned change in aspirations that would increase the positive nature of their association to attainment. Similarly, extending the period of time in which attainment is measured might

also produce an increase in the relationship. Under even the best of circumstances, however, it seems reasonable to question the wisdom of attempting to develop a predictive device for occupational attainment that utilized only goal-specification.

Whatever the intensity of relationships between aspirations and attainment that might be demonstrated through possible refinements, the fact of correlation, and in turn predictive quality, does not establish any necessary causal linkage between aspiration and attainment. Just exactly what part does aspiration play? Unfortunately, the information relevant to clearly answer the question is not available, although it was suggested that aspirations probably play at least some directional role. The exact dimensions of this influence represents an important area for future research.

Whatever causal significance aspirations have for attainment, differentiating types of goal-attainment incongruity still seems a reasonable action. To have aspirations go unmet is to invite frustration and feelings of deprivation. Perhaps the most obvious point where these kinds of differences in kind of incongruity might be manifest is in the degree of frustration or deprivation felt in the work role. The degree of failure may influence the extent and/or nature of other adjustment problems as well. Our own data indicated a marked positive association between deflection from occupational aspirations to undesired subsequent attainments and degree of negative self-evaluation. It is to questions of this order that the apparently unabated interest in the study of aspirations may yield the greatest insight. And, certainly here differentiating beyond simply attainment or non-attainment of occupational goals would seem to be of value.

We can conclude that almost nothing is known empirically about the nature or extent of the relationship of occupational expectations to long-run occupational status attainment. It would seem logical to propose that expectations could demonstrate a higher order positive relationship to attainment than goal-specifications. Furthermore, it would seem reasonable to propose that if there is a difference between the status-levels involved, expectations are more likely to trigger anticipatory socialization for a future job than aspirations. Likewise, one could speculate that the felt deprivation evolving as a result of unmet expectations might be even greater than that which would evolve as a result of failure to attain goal-specifications. Obviously a great deal of research could be directed toward these types of questions.

Longitudinal Development of Occupational Orientations

With the exception of several fine theoretical efforts by Tiedeman and Blau, few researchers have conceptualized interdependent and simultaneous development of the occupational placement process and occupational orientations for individuals.[31] This idea needs to be considered, particularly in reference to the marked need for a better understanding of the intragenerational job mobility of adults. As has been mentioned before very little empirical research has been done on the occupational orientations of adults. As a result most of this section of the paper will be theoretical and speculative in nature.

I will not attempt to develop a complete paradigm outlining the major factors involved in the differential development of either occupational orientations or occupational placement - this would constitute a separate major effort. Rather, an attempt will be made to lay down some descriptive

ideas about how the occupational orientations of individuals relate to different stages of occupational placement.

The occupational placement process is almost universally assumed to be evolutionary. A number of models have been developed to describe its phases of development, but most of these models focus on formation of occupational orientations prior to full-time entrance into the labor market. I think it is fruitful to conceive of the occupationally relevant life span of an individual as consisting of three broad stages - (1) Pre-Work Stage, (2) Full-Work Stage, and (3) Post-Work Stage. These categories roughly correspond to the general and significant age status categories of child-adolescent, adult, and old age respectively.

In the pre-work phase our primary concern is with the development and maturation of occupational orientations rather than with actual work behavior. It is generally accepted that the formation of these orientations are patterned and can be thought of as proceeding through a number of developmental stages. There appear to be at least three broad phases - (1) Fantasy, (2) Tentative, (3) Pre-trial decision.[32] Normally the occupational orientations of the individual are represented as becoming more <u>specific</u>, <u>realistic</u>, and <u>stable</u> as he moves from fantasy orientation to the actual point in time when he must face a decision in reference to taking a full-time occupational role. This is implicit in the commonly used idea of "choice crystallization."[33] We know from past research that the occupational goals of youth in early adolescence are high relative to opportunities in the occupational structure and there is some evidence to indicate that the general goal-level decreases through adolescence - bringing goals more in line with expectations. It seems a logical hypothesis to me that with increasing maturity youth will tend to attain a

greater degree of rational integration between their aspirations and expectations on one hand and between these and job preferences on the other. Those who do not and cannot attain a relatively high level of logical integration among these elements of occupational orientation are likely to be experiencing a high degree of frustration and, in all probability, are not undergoing effective anticipatory socialization that would prepare them for a particular position in the occupational structure. These propositions are obviously worth researching.

Moving into the full-work stage of the placement process, I would expect that the trend toward rational integration of orientations would continue for most individuals. The direction that this integration takes, however, is likely to be strongly influenced by the individual's work experiences, particularly successes and failures in attempts at mobility. If we assume that both occupational orientations and occupational attainments are relatively dynamic phenomena, it seems probable that a reciprocal interdependency exists between them. While the orientations provide motivations and the triggering mechanisms for anticipatory socialization which affect job attainments, the job influences causative factors (i.e., reference groups, role models, self-images, perception of opportunity, etc.) that in turn have some influence on the occupational orientations.

In all probability these dynamics do not operate at even rates through the entire adult work life. If we posit three sub-stages - (1) Trial, (2) Vertically Mobile, and (3) Stable - it may help to conceptualize relative rates of change in orientation. The trial period represents the normal fishing around undertaken by most young adults in attempting to find a job in a setting that they consider satisfying. In all probability

occupational orientations are at their most dynamic state at this point and may change considerably and even dramatically. Once the individual has selected, if he does, the context of his occupation and the general nature of his work role, he enters into the second sub-stage posited above. The vertically mobile period represents the vast portion of an adult's work life and probably a stabilization of orientations. This stabilization is probably attained to the greatest degree late in the individual's work life, but before he approaches retirement.

The final stage, the post-work phase, represents primarily a problem of detachment from full enactment of occupational roles - what we normally call retirement age. This post-work stage of life may well consist of several sub-stages not unlike the vertically mobile and trial periods of the full-work stage operating in reverse; however, to my knowledge little research has been spent on this aspect of man's occupational experience, and, therefore, we can say little about occupational orientation phenomena associated with this stage.

I have summarized this final portion of the paper in Diagram 1. It should be abundantly clear that much research is needed on the interaction existing between the process of occupational orientation formation and occupational mobility and the consequences of differentials in this relationship for the individual and his social behavior. In reference to the social-psychological aspects of occupational mobility, the problem area representing the greatest research need for the future is the study of the relationship existing between the occupational orientations and occupational mobility for adult members of our society.

Summary

In summation, I have attempted to introduce a measure of conceptual clarity into the social-psychological factors involved in occupational

mobility. In many cases the ideas and their interconnections require further elaboration and there is a need to work out effective operational definitions and instruments to measure these adequately. There is an obvious need to start moving in the direction of integrating this partial model with those representing similar focuses in other substantive areas - particularly vocational education, labor economics, the sociology of stratification, and demography. In addition, there is a great need for all concerned with the study of occupational mobility to invest more time, effort and resources in the longitudinal and experimental types of studies required for the development of causal explanations and a valid body of theory. Finally, the most important immediate task is to increase our efforts in logically ordering and specification of our conconceptualization and toward a synthesis of the empirical knowledge we already have at hand.

Diagram 1. A Longitudinal Model of the Occupational Placement Process and Its Interaction With the Development of Occupational Orientations

Childhood-Adolescence (0 - 18)	Adulthood (19 - 64)	Old Age (65+)
Age-Status		
I Pre-Work Life	II Work Life	III Post-Work Life
Occupational Placement Stages		
Fantasy — Tentative — Pre-Trial Decision	Experimental Trial — Vertically Mobile (+) — Stable	Retirement — Vertically Mobile (-)

Changes in Occupational Orientation Elements

- Specificity +
- Realism +
- Stability +

Potential for Deprivation Evolving From Goal Deflection

- + + -

FOOTNOTES

1. For a relatively complete and current listing of such research efforts see William P. Kuvlesky and George W. Ohlendorf, A Bibliography of Literature on Occupational Aspirations and Expectations, College Station: Texas A&M University, Department of Agricultural Economics and Sociology, Departmental Information Report 65-3, August, 1965.

2. This assertion is particularly cogent for a highly industrialized society. For a strong statement of this point of view see Eli Ginzberg, et. al., Occupational Choice: An Approach to a General Theory, New York: Columbia University Press, 1951, pp. 3-4.

3. As A. O. Haller writes, "By now it is a sociological commonplace that a person's occupation exerts pervasive influence on his life." The Occupational Aspiration Scale: Theory, Structure and Correlates, East Lansing: Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station Technical Bulletin No. 288, 1963. For supporting evidence see among others Joseph A. Kahl, The American Class Structure, New York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1953, Chapter 4, and Lipset and Bendix, Social Mobility in Industrial Society, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1962, p. 97 and p. 228.

4. For an explication of this idea note Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, Second Edition, Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1957, Chapter 4.

5. A. O. Haller and I. W. Miller, The Occupational Aspiration Scale, op. cit., p. 5.

6. See, for instance, John B. Edlefsen and Martin Jay Crowe, Teenagers' Occupational Aspirations, Pullman: Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 618, 1960. Often what I am here labeling job preferences are referred to as job values or simply values.

7. E. Grant Youmans, "Occupational Expectations of Twelfth Grade Michigan Boys," Journal of Experimental Education, 24 (June, 1956), pp. 259-271; and Joseph A. Kahl, "Educational and Occupational Aspirations of 'Common Man' Boys," Harvard Educational Review, 23 (Summer, 1953), pp. 186-203.

8. Harry K. Schwarzweller, "Values and Occupational Choice," Social Forces, 39 (December, 1960), p. 20 (Italics added). For other researchers using a similar stimulus question, see the following: R. M. Stephenson, "Realism of Vocational Choice: A Critique and an Example," Personnel and Guidance Journal, 35 (April, 1957), pp. 482-488; John B. Edlefsen and Martin Jay Crowe, Teenagers' Occupational Aspirations, Pullman: Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 618, 1960. Cowhig, et. al., Orientation Toward Occupation and Residence, Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station Special Bulletin 428, 1960 and R. J. Porter, "Predicting Vocational Plans of High School Senior Boys," Personnel and Guidance Journal, 33 (December, 1954), pp. 215-218.

9. Russell Middleton and Charles M. Grigg, "Rural-Urban Differences in Aspirations," Rural Sociology, 24 (December, 1959), p. 365 (Italics added). For examples of other cases where a stimulus question eliciting expectations or "plans" as indicators for aspiration see among others, Lee G. Burchinal, "Difference in Educational and Occupational Aspirations of Farm, Smalltown and City Boys," Rural Sociology, 26 (June, 1961), pp. 107-121; and William H. Sewell, Archie O. Haller and Murray A. Straus, "Social Status and Educational and Occupational Aspiration," American Sociological Review, 22 (February, 1957), pp. 67-73. For a scale indicator of the concept including items representing both dimensions see Haller and Miller, op. cit.

10. This is the definition essentially given by Haller and Miller - "the term indicates that one or more persons are oriented toward a goal," op. cit., p. 7. For a description of the introduction and development of the concept of aspiration see: Morton Deutsch, "Field Theory in Social Psychology," in Gardner Lindzey (ed.), Handbook of Social Psychology, Cambridge, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1954, pp. 181-222; and John W. Gardner, "The Use of the Term Level of Aspiration," Psychological Review, 47 (January, 1940), pp. 59-68.

11. The term goal-area is equivalent to Haller and Miller's use of the term "general object" and in reference to occupational aspirations designates the occupational structure of society, ibid.

12. Stephenson, op. cit.; Lawrence Drabick, The Vocational Agriculture Student and His Peers, Raleigh: North Carolina State University, Departments of Agricultural Education and Rural Sociology, 1963 (mimeographed); Haller and Miller, op. cit., p. 71.

13. See, respectively, Cecil C. North and Paul K. Hatt, "Jobs and Occupations: A Popular Evaluation," Opinion News (September, 1947), p. 343; Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, Population Comparative Statistics for the United States, 1876-1940, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1943. For detailed and thorough discussion of the use of various types of indicators and their advantages and disadvantages see: Haller and Miller, op. cit., pp. 17-28.

14. The use of the term orientation here has a different meaning from that given by Haller and Miller, who use it in reference to variability associated with several aspects of what they call the goal element, op. cit., pp. 7-8. As is true of other researchers, they do not consider the intensity of identification of the magnitude of desire (what we refer to as the orientation element) in their development.

15. See, for example, any of the studies cited up to this point.

16. Frederick C. Fliegel, "Aspirations of Low-Income Farmers and Their Performance and Potential for Change," Rural Sociology, 24 (September, 1959), pp. 205-214. For similar efforts see Russell A. Dynes, et. al.,

"Level of Occupational Aspirations: Some Aspects of Family Experience As a Variable," American Sociological Review, 21 (April, 1956), pp. 212-215 and Leonard Reissman, "Levels of Aspiration and Social Class," American Sociological Review, 18 (June, 1953), pp. 233-242.

17. A particularly strong argument for the need to separate the ideas of aspiration and expectation is presented by Stephenson, op. cit., p. 83. The distinction is also clearly made by Peter Blau and his associates in their article, "Occupational Choice: A Conceptual Framework," Industrial and Labor Relations Review, 9 (July, 1956), pp. 535-536. In a more recent work, Kirk Dansereau also gives strong support to this need, "Work and the Teen-Age Blue-Collarite," in Shostak and Gomberg (eds.), Blue-Collar World: Studies of the American Worker, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964, pp. 184-185.

18. The term "plan" is sometimes used in the literature to refer to what we are calling expectations. Cf. Cowhig, et. al., op. cit., p. 25 and Donald R. Kaldor, et. al., Occupational Plans of Iowa Farm Boys, Ames: Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station Research Bulletin 508, 1962, p. 623.

19. Cf. Stephenson, op. cit.; Drabick, op. cit.; Cowhig, et. al., op. cit.; Richard M. Stephenson, "Mobility Orientation and Stratification of 1,000 Ninth Graders," American Sociological Review, 22 (April, 1957), pp. 204-212; and M. E. John and Kathleen Moyer, Adolescents: Their Interests, Aspirations, and Models, University Park: Pennsylvania Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 695, 1962, pp. 6-8.

20. All of the evidence referred to in footnote 22 supports this contention.

21. Haller and Miller, op. cit., Table 2, p. 60. Also see pp. 8-9.

22. For a good discussion of the temporal dimension of occupational status orientations see Haller and Miller, op. cit., pp. 8-9 and pp. 60-61.

23. Lee G. Burchinal, Career Choices of Rural Youth in a Changing Society, Minneapolis: Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station, N.C.R.P. 142, 1962, p. 6.

24. For an example of an explicit statement of this assumption, see Burchinal, op. cit.

25. The best examples of such theoretical and conceptual efforts would include Haller and Miller, op. cit.; Burchinal, op. cit.; Blau, et. al., op. cit.; Eli Ginzberg, et. al., Occupational Choice: An Approach to a General Theory, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1951), and D. V. Tiedeman, op. cit.

26. See Edward Humphrey Worthington, Vocational and Educational Choices of High School Pupils, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1938 and C. S. Anderson, Young Men Ten Years After Leaving Pennsylvania Rural Schools, University Park: The Pennsylvania State University, Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 468, 1944.

27. R. J. Porter, "Predicting Vocational Plans of High School Senior Boys," Personnel and Guidance Journal, 33 (December, 1954), pp. 215-218.

28. The Sewell-Haller study is reported in Haller and Miller, op. cit., pp. 34-35 and 37-38. My study has not been published and is reported in my Ph.D. dissertation, The Non-Attainment of Adolescents' Occupational Aspirations, University Park: The Pennsylvania State University, 1965.

29. It should be noted that the question used is not viewed as an "ideal" stimulus for several reasons: (1) there may well have been some mixing of expectations and aspirations in answers to the question; and (2) the respondents could have been oriented toward differing goal-periods. However, we presumed that the use of "would" conveyed enough indefinite futureness and "like" a personal preference connotation to generally elicit responses indicating ultimate aspirations.

30. Classified Index of Occupations and Industries, United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C., 1950.

31. Tiedeman, op. cit. and Blau, et. al., op. cit.

32. Burchinal, op. cit. and Ginzberg, et. al., op. cit.

33. Burchinal, op. cit., pp. 6-7.